



AN
EPISTLE
OF
MARGARET EVERARD
TO
The People called *QUAKERS*,
AND
The Ministry among them :

More especially to such of them to whom she hath been particularly known, and who are concerned for her, as if she were lost and fallen from Truth. Shewing her dissatisfaction with the Ignorance, Error, and Uncharitableness that too much abounds among them.

TO all who are heartily concerned for me, fearing I am lost or fallen from Truth. I know no reason for such fear, you might have taken the freedom to have visited me one way or other, and let me have known your reasons. Well, because I believe some do love me, and desire to know how it is with me, I now tell you, and that to the Honour and Praise of my
A good

good God, It is as well, and better with me than ever it was, and the Lord's Presence and Power is with me. Publick and private loving Friends, I had rather not have writ, but left it to time and to the Lord who will plead my Innocent Cause. Now to the best of my remembrance, few have been so kind to come and see me, but have taken things upon report, and have rather passed Sentence and reported again. But all is little to me, the more they have done, the more the Lord is to me: Nay, and I can say, I rather rejoyce, not that they are so unfair as to Judge from a bare report, but that the Lord is pleased to accept of me as a Sufferer for my Lord Jesus Christ's sake. And now my Friends I think to tell you, how I have proceeded, or what I did that was the cause of this disturbance. First, I was not satisfied concerning the state of things as we are a people, I have been dissatisfied for some Years, about the Ministry and the shortness of my own Understanding, and the Gross Errors in our Friends Books, and I cryed to the Lord many times in secret, but durst not pretend to find much fault, only sometimes a little to my Husband about the Ministers; but I knew my self was to blame as well as others, but was not full clear in my Understanding. Neither was I fit to stand a storm, as I did believe it would be, and as I have found it to be, and may yet find more. Such was the great dissatisfaction I met with, that I was much backward to speak in Meetings, and have so been for some Years last past, for some reasons I could give, but one was, I had some small Glimps of some matters of Doctrine which I for my part had never spoke of, nor ever heard any of our Friends speak of as I remember, but did not speak at any time for the reasons aforesaid, nor could I have strength, until my good God gave me strength; then I began in a great deal of fear, I did stammer a little sometimes, and so I do still, as the Lord pleaseth; but no sooner did I so do, but many rose up against me, and my Testimony; it being new Doctrine to them, some said I was gone from my former Innocency and simplicity; others said, I Preached Priests and George Keith's Doctrine, but the Doctrine of neither George Keith, nor any other Man's Doctrine but Christ's, though I love and esteem George Keith for his faithful Testimony to the Doctrine of Christ; some said they could find in their hearts to oppose me, others said they could or would pull me down, some could not stay to hear, and said it is pitiful stuff: by what I said you may Judge what Doctrine I did Preach: first some said, *What Good can a Christ without do us? Let us mind the Light within that is enough for us, and not to trouble our selves with*

a Christ without, and denying the Resurrection. And calling the Preaching of it Wisdom, and a feeding upon the Tree of Knowledge and Scripture notions, and did tell us, in Meetings our Friends did not mind Scripture notions at first.

But to be short as the matter will bear, I have been and am a great sufferer, I count, for Truth. And Friends, I would have us consider what is the reason our Hearts are so Ignorant; Oh truly! I may justly take a part and say, the Leaders of the People have caused them to err. Oh! I have often thought I could bring them no farther than I was come myself. O Friends! we have been in a great extream, and in as great as many others; for they Preach Christ without, but if they believe him within they have been short of Preaching him within, or directing the minds of the people to the Divine Light of Christ, by which they might have been lead to look with the eye of their Souls to Christ without, and in his Light to see the great Love of God in his Son, and what God did by him for poor Mankind, and what he is now a doing in Heaven without us for us, and what he is still to do for us at the great and last day of Judgment.

I say, the People and the Teachers, or very many of them, have been and are short in this weighty matter, and have taken up a Rest short of true Faith in Christ as he was sent to dye for us. I do declare a bare Historical Faith of these things is not sufficient; Oh! no, no, it is a Living Faith wrought in the Heart by the Spirit and Power of God. It is God's Gift, and what our blessed Lord Jesus Christ did purchase by his Death and Sufferings, and shedding of his most precious Blood; and blessed be his pure Eternal Holy Name, he is the dispencer of it, and of all other blessed Gifts and Graces. I say, they come through him to us and for his sake, and although it is said, all Men have not Faith; yet those ought to have it who are teachers of others. For I do declare, those who Preach it and direct to a Living Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, so as to beget any Soul into it, ought to have Faith in some degree themselves; and they that have it not, ought to use all means whereby they may attain to it, because it is impossible to please God without it as the Holy Scripture declareth.

And I say, it is not enough to believe in God, as he is the great Creator and Upholder of all things; but we must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ

Christ as he taught himself; *ye believe in God believe also in me.* Here I understand they did believe in God, and consequently in his Light in their Hearts, which was in order that they might ~~believe~~ believe in him also. *As I said before it is a heart-belief wrought by the Spirit of God, as it is written, with the Heart man believes unto Righteousness, and with the Mouth Confession is made unto Salvation.* And as I said, so I say still, we ought to use all means possible that God hath ordained, to believe, so one great and necessary means is, Reading the Holy Scriptures, and hearing the Doctrine of this great Mystery Preached, to wit, of Faith in Christ Crucified, in which all is included that is necessary to our Salvation; and as we use our endeavours in Reading and Hearing, and as those that speak by the help and assistance of the good Spirit of God, and they that hear are gathered to the same in their own Hearts, as they come to meditate in what they Read and Hear may come to have their Understandings opened at the time of Hearing or Reading; for the Scripture saith, *Faith comes by Hearing, and Hearing by the Word Preached,*

But mark, if there be not a seed of Faith in the Hearts of those that Hear, it will not profit, and it was the manner, and is of Christ's Ministers, to Preach Faith in Christ Crucified, his Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven being a Mediator and Advocate with the Father for us, and Justification by his Blood, or by the Blood of his Cross, to wit, that Blood which was shed on the Cross, and let out of his blessed side with a Spear by the Souldier, as it is written, *one of the Souldiers pierced his side, and forthwith came there out Water and Blood;* and this brings to mind what I have further Read, *there are three which have record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one;* and three which have record on Earth, *the Water, the Spirit, and the Blood, these three agree in one,* and are not to be divided, though they are distinguished, so I say the Apostles and Ministers Preached Christ and the Doctrine of Salvation by him, and whoever brought any other Doctrine, were to be denyed, and the Christians were to separate from them, and so I think they ought to do now.

Some there were that denyed the Lord that bought them, and the great Doctrine of the Resurrection, and so some do still, and the Man Christ his coming to Judge the World, at the last day of Judgment; that great and notable day of the Lord, as the Scriptures say, *And he shall*

shall gather all Nations together before him, then shall our dead Bodies be raised, as the Scripture saith, He shall change our vile or low Bodys, viz: The Bodys of the Saints, and shall make them like unto his Glorious Body: Then God will Judge the World by that Man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given us assurance, in that he hath raised him from the dead. Pray Friends let us Read the Scriptures, and the Lord give us an understanding, and help us against the corruptions of our Nature, and the defilements of Sin, which we derived from our first Parents; for as the Apostle said, by Nature we are Children of Wrath; and as David said, I was born in Iniquity, and in Sin did my Mother conceive me.

Oh! what cause have we to be humbled, and lye at the feet of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ and say, Lord help us and forgive us our trespasses, and this we beg and ask not for our Holiness, or any Works of Righteousness that we have done or can do; though helped by the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ's sake; for although the Spirit of God is a Holy and undefiled Spirit, and we have a manifestation of it; yet such is the frailty of our Nature, that we keep not to it at all times. So I say, it is not for any thing that we can do, or do do; as the Meritorious cause of our Salvation, or acceptance with God, but it is, ^{for} the Righteousness and Obedience of Christ, ~~and~~ a Living Faith in what he did and suffered for us, without us, and what he is now doing for us in Heaven without us, and what he will do for us at the last and great day, as hath been said, and that without us.

I say again, it is not our good Works that is the Meritorious cause of our acceptance, but God's free Love in his Son; and our good Works are the effect of God's Love in Christ, and Christ's Love in giving himself to dye for us, and thereby hath purchased and procured these Holy Gifts and Graces of Faith, Repentance, and Obedience; and he only is worthy of all Honour and Praise, who with a Victorious Patience endured for poor Sinners the Cross, and despised the shame, and is sate down at the Right Hand of God, and is there an ever-living High Priest, who is touched with a feeling of our Infirmities, our blessed Mediator and Advocate.

Oh! how sad is it, that any should make light, or slight these great Truths, as too many do, and have done, to my Knowledge, and to my great

great grief, and the grief of many; to wit, as I have heard some say, *What good can a Christ without do us? Let us mind the Light within, that is sufficient to our Salvation without any thing else:* and much more that I have omitted for brevity sake.

But I say, this is lamentable that our Meetings are clog'd with such stuff; nay, I cannot yet see how it will be otherwise, notwithstanding the fair pretences some have made; but instead of suppressing and stopping them, they are rather tollerated and encouraged, and have their Liberty to Preach and Pray in Meetings, without hindrance; but those that bring the Doctrine of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, and he to be the object of our Faith, the Man Christ as in Heaven without us; I say, these cannot have the same Liberty, but must be opposed and contradicted; and yet at the same time, these that thus oppose and contradict the Faith of Christ, shall say, they have it, and had it, before they came amongst Friends, and yet wanted Peace and were in their Sins; the which if they had had it, the least grain of it, to wit, a living Faith, it would cleanse them from their Envy, and Malice, and other Sins. Oh! but the wicked have it not, though they pretend to it, yet they are without the evidence of it, which is good Works; for as the Apostle saith, *Faith without Works is dead.*

I say again, It is said that people should run into such extreams, one fort laying all without, and others laying all within: Now I say, we ought not to divide Christ, or to exclude him from being within Men and Women, and to be without also; within as he is God, for as God he is Omnipresent, every where in all and over all; but as he is both God and the glorified Man in our Nature; he is now in Heaven without us, in him the fullness dwells; and out of his fulness as a rich Fountain do we all receive Grace and Glory, and no good thing will be withheld from them that believe and Love, and manifest their love to him by their obedience to him: as he said, *If ye love me keep my Commandments.*

The Lord help us, and hasten that the chosen of God in Christ may be gathered, and that those Sheep which are not yet gathered, may be gathered. Oh! surely saith the true Sheep and Church of Christ; *give us whole Christ, not divided.* Oh! for we wanted him every way, we wanted him to dye for us, to speak and satisfy Divine Justice, and
to

to rise again for our Justification. And we wanted him inwardly, to give us the Faith and Comfort of what he hath done and suffered for us outwardly ; and by his holy Spirit and Grace, to renew and Sanctifie us throughout, in Spirit, Soul and Body ; who is our ~~Justice~~ *Justifier* and perfect Saviour and Sanctifier, as he is both God and Man, and with respect both to his outward and inward Coming.

And Friends, least any should Imagine or say, this is not her Inditing, nor would she have put to Print, without being put on or advised by some ; In answer, I tell you, it was my own Act, without the perswasion of any ; and if it were needful, I could produce sufficient Witnesses, who have heard me say often, I shall not be easie, until I have written something, that all that have any true love to me, might understand how it is with me, and the Reason of the disturbance which hath been. But some may further object and say, it looked bad, and contrary to Friends Order, and that I should have sent it at first to the Meeting at *London*, that Friends might have given their approbation, and might have Printed it by Friends Printer.

I readily confess according to such Order I should, and it would have pleased me best, but I could not perswade my self it should ever have been Printed : To me it appears it would be cast out, for I remember a paper sent to the Meeting from a Woman Friend living in *Nottinghamshire* or *Darbyshire*, whose paper was rejected by them, so would mine : some may say, thou might have tryed, but I was not willing to give them trouble, or my self the disappointment. Well, I have done it, and am satisfied, and hope it may satisfy some others, for whose sake chiefly I did it. And as for those, or such as will not be satisfied, I cannot help it, it is no disappointment to me, for I never did nor can propose to satisfy all, nor can I tell who ever did. Some that loves me say, keep Meetings, and speak or teach those things, that is, *The Doctrine of Christ Crucified, together with the Light within, &c.* But I find it will not be endured, except I could be a Hypocrite, and jumble and confound things as some have done and yet do, as I my self Ignorantly have done ; and sometimes to please others, or rather for fear of open opposition ; but I pray God forgive me for Jesus Christ his sake, and preserve me and all the sincere towards him for time to come ; for I am well assured the words of our blessed Lord Jesus are true, and shall be fulfilled in the time appointed, to wit, *Whoever is ashamed of*

me, and of my Words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed, when he comes in the Glory of his Father. And Friends, I have seen great hurt in openly opposing each other; Oh! surely I have reason to say so; I say some have been much offended, and others have gone out of the way for the present, but the Lord my God for his Son Jesus Christ his sake, bring them again to himself, that by a Living Faith in Christ, they may obtain forgiveness, and know the work of Regeneration and Sanctification, in and by the Power and Spirit of Christ in their Hearts.

So with my dear Love to all that Love our Lord Jesus Christ in Truth, and sincerely believe in him, and manifest their Truth and Love to him, by obedience to his Commands; I say to all these, I desire that Grace, Mercy, and Peace from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, may be multiplied and abound in them. Farewell.

The 10th of the Fourth
Month, 1699.

Margaret Everard.

F I N I S.

*London, Printed for Brabazon Aylmer, at the Three Pigeons,
against the Royal Exchange in Cornhill, 1699.*